

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 03942 230238Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-01 /141 W
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R 230123Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 331
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, OECD, AS
SUBJECT: ENERGY: AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP IN IEA

REF: (A) STATE 115103, (B) PARIS 13975

1. W. E. WEEMAES, DIRECTOR, TRANSPORT WAY RESOURCES SECTION,
ECONOMIC POLICY BRANCH, DFA, HAS GIVEN EMBOFF IN CHARGE OF
COMMODITY POLICY MATTERS A RUNDOWN ON CURRENT STATE OF PLAY OG
GOA THINKING ON JOINING INTERNATIONAL ENERGY ASSOCIATION (IEA).

2. ABOUT A MONTH AGO, WEEMAES SAID, FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK

WROTE TO HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES URGING THEM TO TAKE A FRESH
LOOK AT THE
POSSIBILITY OF AUSTRALIA JOINING IEA. THE CABINET AGREED AND
INSTRUCTED AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE (IDC) TO LOOK AT THE
PROPOSAL IN DETAIL.

3. WEEMAES SAID THAT WHILE CABINET IS ANXIOUS THAT IDC REPORT BE
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DONE ASAP, STUDY IS STILL IN ITS FIRST STAGES BECAUSE OF COMPLEX-
ITY OF DOMESOBN ISSUES WHICH MUST BE IRONED OUT (READ COMMONWEALTH
VS. STATE RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRIVATE
INDUSTRY).

4. WEEMAES CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT LANTZKE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
IEA, RECENTLY STOPPED OFF IN CANBERRA AFTER A VISIT TO TOKYO.

HE SAID THAT UPON HIS RETURN TO PARIS, LANTZKE SENT A "COLLECTION OF INFORMATION" OUTLINING THE OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENTS OF A NEW MEMBER (THIS MUST BE LETTER OFFERED TO IN PARA 3 OF REFTEL B).

5. IN SUMMING UP STATE OF PLAY, WEEMAES SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WAS THE POLITICAL WILL TO DO SOMETHING QUICKLY, BECAUSE OF THE COMPLEX DOMESTIC QUESTIONS INVOLVED, IT DID NOT LOOK AS AS THOUGH THE IDC WOULD FINISH ITS WORK BEFORE SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER.

6. WEEMAES SAID THAT BTA WOULD SOON BE INSTRUCTING ITS EMBASSIES IN IEA COUNTRIES TO BE ON LOOKOUT FOR USEFUL IEA MATERIAL. HE ADDS THAT HE WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL FOR ANY MATERIAL WE COULD PASS TO THEM FROM THE DEPARTMENT OR OUR MISSION IN CANBERRA.

7. COMMENT: WEEMAES SAID THAT THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN FAIRLY STRONG SENTIMENT WITHIN DFA (UP TO AND INCLUDING FORMER PEACOCK) BUT THAT THERE HAD BEEN FEAR IN SOME OTHER DEPARTMENTS AS TO THE POSSIBLE OF REPORTING COST TO AUSTRALIA. IN ADDITION, GOA DECIDED NOT TO JOIN WHILE CIEC WAS IN SESSION (READ THEY WERE AFRAID TO UPSET THE ARABS). AS THESE FEARS HAVE RECEDED INTO THE PAST, THOSE PRO-IEA FORCES IN DVB HAVE COME TO THE FORE. AS THINGS APPEAR TO BE PROCEEDING AT A NORMAL (FOR AUSTRALIA) RATE AND AS GOA WELL AWARE OF USG VIEWS AS TO DESIRABILITY OF AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP, WE PROPOSE FOR TIME BEING TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MERETO FOLLOW PROGRESS OF IDC REPORT PROCESS BUT TO MAKE NO ADDITIONAL "HARD-SELL" AT THIS TIME.

8*(ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE AUTHORIZATION FROM DEPARTMENT AND USOECD TO PASS ON CERTAIN IEA INFORMATION TO WEEMAES. WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD SERVE TO FURTHER DEMONSTRATE CONTINUED U.S. INTEREST IN AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP.
ALSTON

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